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Using a CLTS approach and / or CLTS tools in urban environments: themes and trends

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This paper draws on nine different examples across seven countries that have either used a Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach or CLTS tools in peri-urban and urban environments. It compliments and adds to previous work by the author. It finds that in the urban setting, CLTS is rarely conducted in isolation but is a tool used as part of a wider strategy. It also acknowledges the importance of engaging different stakeholders, most crucially local government, and provides some guidance for those wanting to start new partnerships with government and non-government actors.

Introduction

Open defecation, though predominantly a rural phenomenon, is still practiced in many peri-urban and urban environments. Unimproved, basic and dirty latrines and unsafe and unhygienic management of faeces pose additional challenges. Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) was originally designed to be used in rural areas. However there are a small number of cases where a CLTS approach and/or CLTS tools have been used to try and tackle some of these urban problems.

This paper is a follow-up to *An Update of Themes and Trends in Urban Community-Led Total Sanitation Projects* (Myers, 2015) which was presented at the 38th WEDC International Conference at Loughborough University in 2015. It adds to the earlier edition, including new cases and further expanding on the characteristics, problems and solutions previously identified, as well as presenting new themes.

Method

The paper uses information collected from nine different projects across seven countries. These are:
1. Project Malio, Fort Dauphin, Madagascar
2. Community Led Urban Environmental Sanitation approach, Iringa, Tanzania
3. USAID Indonesia Urban Water, Sanitation and Hygiene project
4. Plan Ethiopia's urban CLTS work
5. UNICEF and World Visions urban CLTS work in Ethiopia
6. Plan Uganda's urban CLTS work
7. WASTE Zambia's triggering in Sanitation in Peri-Urban Areas project
8. CLTS Legal Enforcement, Choma, Zambia
9. CLTS and PHAST in small towns in Mozambique.

Grey literature has been used to find commonalities across the different ways a CLTS approach and/or tools have been used in the urban environment. In addition, data was collected through discussions with practitioners and field visits to project sites in Ethiopia and Zambia. Project Malio and CLTS Legal Enforcement were included in the earlier summary. In the past year SEED Madagascar (formerly Azafady) released a series of learning documents drawing out key lessons from the first year of Project Malio (Azafady, 2015a; Azafady, 2015b; Azafady, 2015c). Furthermore, an interview was conducted with a member of staff who worked on the CLTS Legal Enforcement approach in Choma, Zambia.

The analysis is based on different case-studies all with their own characteristics. Consequently, there are context specific factors that may be lost in this overview. However, readers are encouraged to consult the reference list for further information on the individual projects where available.

Themes and trends

Knowledge coupled with flexibility
Contextual knowledge alongside the ability to be flexible and innovative is a necessary condition for the success of any urban sanitation project for underserved populations (Mitlin, 2016). The need for the approach to be designed based on the context of a specific town or city has been underlined in project documents from Indonesia (IUWASH, 2015), Madagascar (Azafady, 2015a) and Mozambique (Thomas and Alvestegui, 2015). A staff member from Plan Uganda described the approach they had been using in the small towns of Luweero and Tororo as being 'contextual urban CLTS'. Staff had originally transferred the rural model to the urban environment and worked with tenants. However, they changed tactics and started working with landlords and local governments instead. They also spent time experimenting and working out which tools were applicable in the urban context. SEED Madagascar in Fort Dauphin, admit that their approach is still evolving. They praised their donor for the flexibility and willingness to let the organisation make changes (Azafady, 2015b). Having a good knowledge of the context at the same time as acknowledging that one's understanding can change during the life cycle of a project is essential; organisations should be able to adjust to new learning and adapt activities accordingly.

Embedding CLTS into a wider behaviour change communication strategy
CLTS tools are often used as one part of a larger behaviour change communication (BCC) plan. A study looking at the sustainability of open defecation free status in rural areas in four African countries found that attendance at triggering was important for latrine use. The authors recommended getting as many people and as many households to attend as possible (Tyndale-Biscoe, 2013) However, in urban areas it is difficult to guarantee a critical mass of people will attend community meetings and triggerings. In Lalibela, Ethiopia, Plan Ethiopia staff estimated that 45%-55% of community members attended triggering sessions. This suggests the need to compliment CLTS with other activities. In Mozambique, UNICEF found rural sanitation mobilisation tools such as CLTS and PHAST had been successful but also recommended that they be supplemented with other demand generation activities (Thomas and Alvestegui, 2015). Examples of other actions include:

- In Fort Dauphin radio messages and other forms of media were used. In addition, project staff conducted household visits to discuss use, cleaning, maintenance and handwashing (Azafady 2015a).
- Indonesia Urban Water, Sanitation and Hygiene project uses household-level promotion to build on community-level triggering and action (IUWASH, 2015). Sanitation and community cadres are supposed to provide behaviour change assistance on latrine use, maintenance and handwashing (USAID and IUWASH, 2015).
- In Hawassa, Ethiopia, community triggering was followed by household triggering in compounds. Each compound was visited and households living on the compound were brought together for a smaller triggering. Pathways for faecal contamination were demonstrated with water, bread/biscuits and kitchen utensils. Households were also taken to toilets in the same way that communities in rural areas are taken to open defecation sites.

Additional activities and forms of communication can reinforce the messages conveyed as well as ensure that all community members are reached.

Embedding BCC into wider programming
In reality, the sanitation challenge in many urban areas is usually too much for a traditional rural CLTS model to cope with, even if part of a wider BCC strategy. Demand creation needs to be embedded into a larger sanitation strategy.

In the Indonesia Urban Water, Sanitation and Hygiene programme, funded by USAID, the sanitation component focuses on improved household and community latrines, increased access to sewage systems, integrated septage management and strengthened waste water management institutions. As part of increasing access to improved latrines triggering and other promotion activities are used to convince households to

invest and engage in sanitation improvement measures (USAID and IUWASH, 2015). In order to achieve this *A Guide to Urban Sanitation Promotion* has been produced (IUWASH, 2015a). In addition to BCC, which uses triggering techniques, the guide also includes sections on the development of sanitation entrepreneurs and financing options such as working with micro-finance service providers (Ibid). In Iringa, Tanzania, where the Community-Led Urban Environmental Sanitation (WSSCC et al., 2011) approach is being implement CLTS tools are used as the first of a six step participatory planning process for *process ignition and demand creation* (MAMADO). Additional steps include launching the planning process, conducting a detailed assessment of the situation, prioritization of community problems and validation, identification of service options and the development of an action plan (MAMADO; WSSCC e al., 2011). In Mozambique, a rural CLTS approach was used on the outskirts of towns as part of a city-wide Sanitation Master Plan (Thomas and Alvestegui, 2015).

Financing

The cost of latrines are higher in urban areas and usually beyond the means of the poor. For those living in poverty, sanitation deemed acceptable by authorities is unaffordable individually and collectively (McGranahan, 2015). There are examples of projects with no financial component. However, a spectrum of financial mechanisms, both loans and subsidies, for public, communal and household latrines are also being used in some contexts. In Ethiopia, UNICEF and World Vision have been working in eight small towns whose population varies between 2,000 and 10,000. No household subsidies are offered but they are constructing latrines at bus stops, market places, stadiums, health posts and prisons. In Hawassa, Ethiopia, households without space or resources for latrines and those living on the street have had some public or communal toilets provided for them.

There also projects that have been working with financial institutions encouraging households to take out loans to build improved latrines. In Zambia, WASTE in conjunction with a microfinance institution, has been designing a financial product specifically for the purchasing of urine diversion dry toilets. Loans are not given in cash but in materials and in labour. A Bill of Quantity is filled out listing what is needed, loans can be reduced if households can provide the materials themselves. Repayments are made over a 24 month period which starts once the latrine has been completed. In Nakuru, Kenya, Practical Action collaborated with a bank which provided loans for new additional and improved facilities in line with approves designs (Pasteur and Prabhakaran, 2015). Both WASTE and Practical Action provided a guarantee fund in case households default.

Material subsidies for the poorest have also been used. SEED Madagascar have offered financial support to 800 of the most vulnerable households and 13 schools. Households who require support must contribute a small amount themselves. Materials are given and households carry out the majority of the manual work themselves with guidance from a construction team (Azafdy, 2015a; Azafdy, 2015c).

Stakeholders

When using a CLTS approach or CLTS tools in an urban context, the 'community' needs to be wider than just the residents of a particular area. Partnerships and relationships with multiple stakeholders become essential (Myers, 2015).

Working with local governments is a must. In the latest edition of *Urbanization and Environment*, which focuses on sanitation and drainage, the editor writes 'in most urban contexts, individual citizens can achieve little on their own; to achieve scale, they need to work in collaboration with their governments' (Mitlin, 2016, 368). Depending on the context, different local government departments will need to be engaged. Urban government structures are often complex, confusing and difficult to navigate. It is therefore unhelpful to give recommendations on what departments to work with. What is more useful is looking at different examples of what roles local government departments have played. For example in Kabwe, Zambia, local government have created by-laws, issued land records and occupancy licenses so loans can be approved and provided statistics about the project area. In Nakuru, Kneya, Practical Action and the Umande Trust had to get permission from government to work with informal sector pit emptiers (Pasteur and Prabhakaran, 2015). Working with governments can be difficult. Plan Ethiopia listed the high turnover of government staff as one of the main challenges for the CLTS project in Lalibela.

Other partnerships depend on what additional programming is decided upon. For example, banks and microfinance institutions are used in projects that include a loan component. An important thing to note is that the more stakeholders involved, the more complex the management structure becomes. SEED

Madagascar found it challenging to coordinate two different teams – one which worked on construction and the other working on behaviour change activities (Azafady, 2015b). Picking the right stakeholders is vital. In Kabwe, WASTE were originally working with the Zambia National Building Society but then changed to working with the Community Empower Fund (CEF), a local microfinance institution. CEF not only had less stringent criteria but were also able to approve loans faster as they did not require applications to be signed off by a board based in Lusaka. CEF was also able to create a more practical sanitation financing product.

As mentioned in previous work unlike in rural areas the management of faecal sludge needs to be tackled head on (Myers, 2015). Additional stakeholders need to be engaged to ensure the safe emptying, containment and treatment of faecal waste.

Local government, often a multitude of different departments, must be stakeholders. Where possible finding partners like financial institutions or supply chain actors with a good understanding of the local context and those that are able to act quicklu, innovate and adapt to local conditions is likely to increase the chance of success.

Enforcement

Projects have also been working with local governments to enforce regulation. IUWASH programme in Indonesia found that in urban areas it was much more difficult to enforce community-level rules and therefore have pushed for formal regulation and strict enforcement (IUWASH, 2015). Plan Uganda has been trying to get local government to enforce the Public Health Act which requires landlords to provide basic sanitation for tenants. In Leku Town, Ethiopia, Plan found that businesses with unhygienic latrines were the prime challenge. They combined CLTS with enforcement to make sure the worst performing businesses improved their facilities.

In Chome, Zambia, CLTS Legal Enforcement was designed to improve sanitation in public places, public buildings, restaurants, lodges and markets. The UNICEF initiative conducted triggering in communities. They also engaged council police, magistrates and Environmental Health Technicians. A fast-track court that could issue fines quickly for non-compliance was set up. Businesses and vendors were first given a warning then a fine if they did not comply. Landlords agreed on a date of completion and were told they would receive a fine if they hadn't made the necessary changes in the agreed upon time.

Lessons learnt

At this stage two findings are conclusive:
- The traditional CLTS model will not work in an urban context without adaptation. CLTS tools are often embedded into a wider BCC approach which in turn are part of a wider sanitation strategy. Consequently, the term *UCLTS* may not be helpful, as SEED Madagascar suggest, highlighting that their urban approach has deviated so drastically from the model they use in their rural programmes. However, they also acknowledge that the process is still community-led, collective behaviour change that aims for the elimination of open defecation (Azafady). This is true across many projects. As shown above and discussed previously (Myers, 2015), some CLTS principles and tools are used while others are ignored. Instead of using *UCLTS*, a CLTS approach or CLTS tools in urban environments better describe the on-the-ground realities.
- Contextual knowledge and flexibility can spark innovation as well as increase the likelihood of success. Working with organisations that can adapt policies and practices quickly is important. This calls for donors to allow for a more reflexive planning process as well as other partners with the ability and willingness to move fast and respond to local conditions. When using CLTS tools it is important to build on the momentum of the triggering process. Organisations work at different speeds – finding those who can make decisions quickly rather than slowing down the process is likely to be extremely beneficial.

Agenda for learning and research

This is the second time this type of overview has been completed. Neither paper attempted to judge the overall success rate of projects but instead looked for commonalities. Action orientated research is needed on:
- Other approaches that are successful in creating demand as well as increasing participation in urban sanitation projects
- Circumstance in which the use of a CLTS approach or tools is useful/not useful
- Whether CLTS activities should be part of a wider toolbox on ways to engage communities?

- CLTS's place in city-wide or town-wide approaches?
- How to ensure that local government takes a leading role.
- At what phase is it best to introduce sludge management actors?

The use of a CLTS approach and CLTS tools, like urban sanitation generally, is highly context specific. Though not a revolutionary statement it should be stressed here so as to shape future research and the questions asked. Overviews like this one are useful at the beginning however now we need to delve into more detailed examination of particular cases. Those who have seen good progress in their use of CLTS tools and approaches in an urban and peri-urban setting are encouraged to document and reflect on their experiences, focusing specifically on what has made it successful.

Conclusion

This paper has drawn on new examples to both deepen and expand the ideas presented in previous work. It has shown that UCLTS does not adequately explain the range of uses CLTS principles and tools can have in urban environments and that a more appropriate term could help push the conversation forward without undermining rural practice. It also begins to unpack some of the selection criteria for stakeholders – though in reality finding organisations that fit the bill is often extremely challenging. This overview looked for similarities, themes and trends and has therefore overlooked much of the detail in the case-studies it draws on and readers are encouraged to consult the reference list for further information where it is available. Finally, those interested in researching the application of CLTS tools in urban environments are encouraged to explore case-studies in more detail, drawing out successes and considering what lessons might be applicable to the wider urban sanitation community.

Acknowledgements

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